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**General and complete disarmament: promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation**

# Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation

## Report of the Secretary-General

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# I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 8 of its resolution 58/44 of 8 December 2003, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the issue of the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and to submit a report containing that information to the Assembly at its fifty-ninth session.

2. Pursuant to that request, on 8 March 2004 a note verbale was sent to Member States inviting them to provide information on the subject. The replies received are reproduced in section II below. Additional replies received will be issued as addenda to the present report.

# II. Replies received from Governments

## Guatemala

[Original: Spanish]
[8 June 2004]

1. The Army of Guatemala is aware of the decisive role played by the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs in coordinating the collective efforts of all Member States to maintain international peace and security.

2. Furthermore, in reviewing each of the measures set out in General Assembly resolution 58/44, it is clear that the steps proposed are the best way at present to resolve conflicts between the countries of the Western hemisphere, and that at the same time they help to further all aspects of the maintenance of democracy, peace and security.

3. We share the view that the basis for achieving the proper degree of peace and security in the hemisphere is a common effort on the part of all countries, fully dedicated to justice, values, principles and legality that help individuals to develop in a climate of peace and tranquillity, as established in the domestic legislation of each Member State and as mandated by international law in that regard.

4. Topics such as multilateralism will have to be kept constantly under study by each of the Member Governments, and they must strive to translate them into specific activities to be evaluated and monitored by the Department for Disarmament Affairs under various programmes of work so that they can be conducted in the best possible way. That would obviously advance the maintenance of peace, coexistence, democracy and hence security in all the nations of the hemisphere.

5. Accordingly, the existing agreements on arms regulation and on orderly, effective disarmament ought to be put into practice, without at the same time departing from the domestic legislation of each Member State.

## Honduras

[Original: Spanish]
[14 May 2004]

With reference to resolution 58/44, we concur with the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs as concerns the need to promote multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. Accordingly, Honduras supports the resolution, which, in line with the Charter of the United Nations, seeks to maintain peace and remove threats to the security of States, just as it supports what is stated in the Millennium Declaration regarding the promotion of economic and social development and the exercise of multilateralism as a way of managing threats to the security of States.

It should be emphasized that the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation is a matter of interest to the American hemisphere, as a means of minimizing the impact of the cold war legacy, which left a great many weapons lying about unsupervised. In addition, it promotes a scenario of peace, freedom, democracy and country development.

Insofar as Honduras is concerned, it is a participant, under the Framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America, in the arms reduction and arms control programme in Central America, which seeks to achieve a reasonable balance of forces and encourage stability, mutual trust and transparency.

## Lebanon

[Original: Arabic]
[14 May 2004]

Lebanon is aware of the need for progress in arms regulation and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction on the basis of non-discriminatory and transparent negotiations, in view of the threat that these weapons pose to global stability. Lebanon rejects recourse to unilateral actions to solve security problems, affirms the principle of multilateralism as the basis for promoting negotiations with regard to arms regulation and disarmament, and urges the international community to hold relevant States accountable in case of non-compliance and to compel Israel, which possesses and is developing weapons of mass destruction, to cooperate in disarmament in order to safeguard peace and security in the region and confront the dangers that threaten it. It should be noted that Lebanon does not possess, produce or manufacture nuclear weapons, and is in favour of agreements mandating non-proliferation and non-production of nuclear weapons.

## Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[12 May 2004]

Mexico fully endorses resolution 58/44, for it considers it to be a very significant contribution to the international efforts to promote the strict observance of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, especially the principle of the sovereign equality of Member States.

For Mexico, it is obvious that in an era of growing globalization and an ongoing information and telecommunications revolution, the threats to international security and the problems surrounding disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation are of interest to each and every country in the world, particularly those who have been directly affected. For this reason, all States should have the possibility of participating in the negotiations that will decide what action must be taken to deal with such a global situation.

Multilateralism, in the view of the Government of Mexico, is the most effective path to the maintenance of international peace and security, especially through collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means the settlement of disputes.

Mexico also gives its full support to the structure of existing disarmament, arms-regulation and non-proliferation agreements offering the appropriate treaty-based infrastructure for further progress in those fields on the basis of universal, multilateral, non-discriminatory, binding and transparent negotiations.

Mexico urges all interested States to participate in negotiations on disarmament, arms-regulation and non-proliferation in a non-discriminatory and transparent manner, and it underlines the importance of preserving the United Nations disarmament machinery and the structure of existing disarmament agreements, which constitute a clear expression of the positive results of sound international cooperation and multilateral negotiations in response to the challenges facing the peoples of the entire world.

In Mexico's view, a resort to unilateral actions by Member States in resolving their security concerns, especially with regard to cases of non-compliance, seriously jeopardizes international peace and security and undermines confidence in the international security system as well as the very foundations of the United Nations. It is therefore essential for the States parties to the relevant disarmament, arms-regulation and non-proliferation instruments to consult one another and to cooperate as far as possible in resolving those concerns, refraining from resorting or threatening to resort to unilateral measures to settle them and from making unverified charges of non-compliance.

Mexico has always recognized the complementarity of bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral negotiations in the fields of disarmament, arms regulation and non-proliferation. However, when faced with the emergence of initiatives taking a partial approach to the problems arising from the constant innovations and the development and production of and trafficking in materials and arms, especially weapons of mass destruction and highly sophisticated conventional weapons and their delivery systems, Mexico reaffirms multilateralism as the core principle in negotiations with a view to general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

## Qatar

[Original: Arabic]
[22 April 2004]

**Comments of the concerned authority in the State of Qatar on paragraphs 4 and 8 of General Assembly resolution 58/44:**

(a) Regarding paragraph 4, we inform you that the State of Qatar has not taken any measures because it has no weapons requiring disarmament.

(b) Regarding paragraph 8, the State of Qatar wishes it to be known that it supports General Assembly resolution 58/44 entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation", adopted on 8 December 2003.

## Venezuela

[Original: Spanish]
[18 May 2004]

The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela believes that promoting and consolidating the multilateral disarmament system within the United Nations is basic to directing global policies with a view to establishing conditions of peace and security. In view of the new threats to international security, Venezuela is convinced of the need to acknowledge and strengthen the relevance both of the Disarmament Commission in particular and the First Committee in general.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela expresses its deep concern that recently initiatives have been taken in the matter of disarmament and non-proliferation that have been developed in a context independent of the United Nations. Venezuela consequently considers it essential to affirm its support for any initiative that aims at achieving international peace and security, provided that it strengthens the multilateral disarmament system of the United Nations. The Government of Venezuela also views with concern the possibility that disarmament and non-proliferation questions might be transferred to the Security Council, given the recent Council resolution on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (resolution 1540 (2004)).

The State of Venezuela supports, cooperates in and carries out measures against the arms build-up and in favour of non-proliferation, yet it believes that any action taken in that regard must be conducted in accordance with international law and under the aegis of the United Nations. Using these criteria, Venezuela affirms its support for the United Nations multilateral disarmament system as the suitable forum for taking decisions of common interest and global reach.

## Zambia

[Original: English]
[24 May 2004]

Zambia supports the efforts to promote multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. In this regard, it continues to reaffirm the absolute validity of disarmament aimed at resolving international conflict peacefully.